

## MEMORANDUM

To: Bob Tedford/Recreation Department

From: Thomas C. Boscarino *TCB*

Date: October 1, 2008

Re: Minutes of Operations Subcommittee Meeting

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The Meeting of the Operations Subcommittee of the Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order at approximately 6:45 p.m. on Tuesday evening, September 30, 2008. Those in attendance were commission and subcommittee members Gordon Oliver, Michael Pantusco and Thomas Boscarino, and commission member Thomas Stauffer. Also in attendance were Recreation Director Robert Tedford and James Maitland, an Ellington resident and a party in interest relative to tennis programs in the Town of Ellington.

The initial business discussed was the status of the Ellington High School Co-op (with Somers) tennis teams. Mr. Maitland advised that he recently received word from the Athletic Director at Ellington High School that the NCCC had approved the high school co-op girls and boys tennis teams as varsity teams for the 2008-2009 season. The discussion then centered on the possibility of developing and constructing a suitable tennis facility for the high school varsity and sub varsity programs. Mr. Maitland outlined the number of interested participants in the program both in the informal programs which have been organized and at the high school level. The subcommittee members reviewed the maps of the high school facilities and Recreation Director Robert Tedford pointed out an area at the high school which might be utilized for the construction of four (4) tennis courts. A discussion was had relative to the site and the approximate cost (based upon past estimates) associated with the construction of same. Mr. Maitland indicated that the USTA has been very active and has voiced strong support, both financial and otherwise, for the development of the tennis program. Mr. Maitland indicated that the USTA has committed to financially assist at the rate of 20% to 25% of the construction costs. Mr. Maitland also indicated that there has been some private fund raising and there are significant donors "in the wings" who would assist in addressing the construction costs so long as the Town of Ellington demonstrated a willingness to fund a portion of the project. Mr. Maitland presented a detailed site construction manual published by the USTA and indicated that representatives from USTA would visit the site, at no cost, and put together a site recommendation and construction budget which could be utilized in the presentation to the appropriate municipal agencies. It was agreed that the Recreation Director, with the assistance of Mr. Maitland, would pursue the USTA site visit and construction quote. It is the intent of the subcommittee to refer the project to the appropriate

municipal agencies, both for budget approval and from a site location, development and construction perspective, and otherwise demonstrate its support for the project. It was agreed that the professional and financial services which USTA has to offer must be made an integral part of the approval process as they are experts in site location, construction needs, etc.

The subcommittee also reviewed a variety of area projects which may or may not affect recreational activities but which the subcommittee and the recreation director believe warranted the recreation department input. The subcommittee considered the Crane Road Project, the Pinney/Middle Road property, the Crystal Ridge Project and the Green Street property, reviewing the maps and topography in an attempt to determine whether or not any of those properties could be utilized, in the short term or the long term, for recreational facilities. It was agreed that the recreation commission's interest in these projects/properties be conveyed to the appropriate municipal officials and that further consideration be given as to whether or not any one or all of the properties/projects are feasible for development of necessary recreational facilities. In particular, a discussion was had as to why the Pinney Street/Middle Street property (which is currently owned by the Town of Ellington) could not be immediately utilized for necessary Ellington recreational/athletic facilities such as additional soccer fields, lacrosse fields, softball and baseball fields, etc.

The intent of the general discussion held by the recreation commission subcommittee members was to make it clear to municipal authorities that the Ellington Recreation Commission has a keen and present interest in clearly identifying properties that are currently owned by the Town of Ellington, and properties that are being pursued for acquisition by the Town of Ellington, etc, for the purpose of immediate and near term construction of necessary additional athletic facilities for the residents of the Town of Ellington. Members of the subcommittee wish town authorities to update the list of Ellington properties shown on a map dated October, 2007 so that appropriate site visits could be made in an attempt to determine feasibility of use as athletic/recreational locations.

A discussion was also had relative to the potential relocation of the recreation department administrative offices from its present site on Main Street to an offsite location. Although reservation was expressed by the subcommittee members relative to the proposed relocation and the specific plan presented, it was agreed that the recreation commission and recreation department would support such an offsite relocation so long as the needs of the recreation department were adequately addressed, with particular regard to the issues of storage, vandalism, safety, noise, etc.

Lastly, a discussion was had relative to the Ellington Trails project and Recreation Director Robert Tedford indicated that the department was in the process of receiving and collating responses to the survey. It is expected that once an adequate number of responses are received from the residents from the Town of Ellington a joint meeting will be solicited with the conservation commission.

In summary, the subcommittee members believe that a written response to the First Selectman and other government municipal officials and departments should be made seeking the identification of any and all agencies which would or should be included in the discussion of the further development of athletic and recreational facilities and to identify the specific properties which might be utilized to satisfy the recreation department's immediate needs and 5 year plan for the development of recreational facilities.

The meeting concluded at approximately 8:35 p.m.